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gorilla suit and a sign identifying the gorilla as LB 775, and the gist of the press conference, the gist of the interview was that LB 775 is the 800-pound gorilla in the state budget. Nobody can touch it. Now I support the LB 775 program, but I have to admit I got a kick out of the gorilla. It was a funny idea. It was a clever way to make a legitimate point about the status of LB 775. The point that I want to make today is, if LB 775 is the 800-pound gorilla, then state aid is King Kong--by far the largest item in the budget, dwarfing LB 775. And it's King Kong, because anyone who messes with it risks getting crushed. So why am I standing here messing with it? I serve on the Education Committee and on the Health Committee, the two highest spending areas of the budget. Health spending is tough to handle because so much of it is beyond our control. People are disabled. People get sick, they get old, they lose or they can't get health insurance, and the richest society in the world has an obligation to take care of them. So the fiscal crisis in healthcare is driven by many factors that are beyond our control. Education is different. We've brought on, ourselves, the runaway growth in state K-12 spending because we've created a system that encourages schools to spend more local dollars in order to qualify for more state aid dollars--spend more to get more. That's the ethic that we've built into our system. That's why K-12 spending increases at rates totally disconnected to inflation or any other economic reality. Have you looked at the gold book to see the fiscal shock wave coming at us in the '05-07 biennium? Senator Brashear stole a little of my thunder here but that's okay. I was glad to see that other people are also looking down the road. I'm going to focus on the state aid portion of that biennium. It's on page 37, if you want to check it out for yourselves. I also gave you a handout on it. Fiscal Year '05-06, state aid goes from \$631 million to \$781 million--\$150 million increase, 24 percent. The next year, '06-07, it goes from \$780 to \$880, 13 percent increase. That means that over that two-year period we will be putting nearly \$400 million more dollars into state aid. Are you following what's happening here? In this budget we're working on now we're going to arbitrarily, temporarily cage "King Kong" for two years and then, boom, he's back out again in the '05-07 biennium. There is an amendment. I'm told by the education lobby that there is an amendment being prepared to LB 540, the